

An ongoing partition: histories, borders, and the politics of vivisection in Jammu and Kashmir

Chitralkha Zutshi*

Department of History, The College of William and Mary, Williamsburg, USA

This article begins the process of conceptualizing the drawing of multiple borders across Kashmir in the postcolonial period from the perspective of partition. It reviews the literature on partition and borders to argue that vivisection and its politics has played a significant role in defining the nature of the ongoing crisis in the region. The making and traversal of divisions – territorial, material, and ideological – lies at the heart of making sense of the Kashmir issue and offers possibilities for its resolution.

Keywords: Kashmir; partition; borders; historiography

Introduction

The historiography on British India's partition in 1947 has moved from an analysis of high politics at the center to a study of the regions as well as people's experiences (Butalia 2000), and more recently, to attempting to illuminate the interconnections between elite politics and people's involvement in this momentous event (Talbot and Singh 2009; Nair 2011; Roy 2012). However, Jammu and Kashmir has rarely figured in these analyses, as studies of politics and violence in Punjab and Bengal continue to dominate this historiography. At the same time, Kashmir has found little mention in the growing scholarship on the borderlands of South Asia, even though one of the world's most dangerous borders runs through this region, effectively partitioning it between India and Pakistan. Far from being a settled historical fact that occurred in the past and is now complete, moreover, partition(s) continue to inform the politics of the region as well as the lives of the people who inhabit it. This is because the erstwhile princely state of Jammu and Kashmir has been partitioned several times between different entities and along diverse lines, beginning with the drawing of the Ceasefire Line (now the Line of Control [LOC]) between India and Pakistan in 1949. Other partitions include those within Pakistan between Gilgit-Baltistan (the erstwhile Northern Areas) and Azad Kashmir, as well as between the provinces of Pakistan and these two entities. In India, there are divisions among the constituent parts of the state of Jammu and Kashmir – Ladakh, the Kashmir Valley, and Jammu – as well as between the state as a whole and the rest of India.

The purpose of this article is to begin the process of conceptualizing the drawing of multiple borders across Kashmir in the postcolonial period from the perspective of partition. Through a review of the literature on the subject, it illustrates that this is an imperative

*Email: cxzuts@wm.edu

exercise because the idea of vivisection, which functions at both the literal and conceptual levels in this region, has contributed significantly to the nature of the ongoing crisis in Kashmir. The review focuses on the recent literature on borderlands and partition that emphasizes the impact on Kashmir and its inhabitants of the drawing of actual and metaphorical borders, rather than the literature on the geopolitics of the creation of the border in 1947 (for instance, Jha 1996). Indeed, the argument of the article is that the ongoing processes of bordering and partition need to be understood on their own terms, rather than as tethered to the high politics of the first partition in 1947–1949, because the latter is still so deeply mired in the national claims and counterclaims of India and Pakistan. The emergence of divisions as a result of the creation of borders through the continuing processes of partition, as well as their incessant traversal – by individuals, nationalist and political ideologies, and material goods – lies at the heart of making sense of the Kashmir issue.

Revisiting partition(s) at the margins: 1947–1949

Commenting on the state of partition historiography at the end of the last century, Gilmartin noted that,

... partition presents a story that cannot easily be narrativized simply within the frame of the territorial nation-state's history ... It dramatizes more than most events the tension between the idea of an 'objective' narrative history centered on the state and the multiple identities (and multiple narratives) constructed on the margins. (1998, 1070)

This statement rings especially true in the case of Kashmir, which, in part because of a partition that is not accepted by either India or Pakistan, lies within both states and therefore within neither. Its status as a disputed territory divided by a legally unrecognized border has rendered it into a liminal space – an 'alienated borderland' (Martinez 2002, 2) – and explains, in part, its elision within the historiography of partition, which despite transcending and bridging national state boundaries, remains to an extent wedded to them.

Since Gilmartin's essay, partition scholarship has made great strides in terms of addressing the issue of people's experiences during the moment and beyond, and in bridging the gap between elite politics at the center and the violence that engulfed particular regions of the Subcontinent in the summer of 1947 (Hasan 2000; Khan 2007; Zamindar 2007; Nair 2011). Much of this scholarship has emphasized the idea that partition cannot be studied as an event that took place at a particular historical moment but rather as a process that transcended the moment of independence and the creation of Pakistan. According to these scholars, partition needs to be placed in the broader context of state formation and the rivalry between India and Pakistan in the postcolonial period (Khan 2007; Zamindar 2007). Again, in no other region of South Asia is this more visible than in Kashmir, where questions of the relationship between India and Pakistan as well as the center and states within each of these entities; national identity; displaced peoples; and violence, all of which are a direct result of its partition in 1949 and the intermittent wars between India and Pakistan since then, continue to shape politics and the lives of its inhabitants in palpable ways. Indeed, the people of Muzaffarabad, Srinagar, Baltistan, Kargil, and Leh, to name a few places in this region, daily experience the effect of earlier partitions even as the process of drawing new dividing lines unfolds continuously around them.

And yet, there is remarkably little written about the literal and metaphorical casualties of partition in the case of Jammu and Kashmir. And this despite the fact that the inhabitants of

this princely state suffered violence and displacement not just in 1947, but throughout the course of the two years as India and Pakistan fought their first war over the region from 1947 to 1949. It is worth discussing the few exceptions that exist, since they remind us of how crucial this endeavor is and how much more remains to be done. Most of this scholarship is clearly in the tradition of recent partition historiography that focuses on the impact of this tumultuous moment on people's lives, through a recovery of the memories of those who lived through these times.

In *A Mission in Kashmir* (2007), for instance, Whitehead unearths the untold story of the inhabitants of the town of Baramulla in the Kashmir Valley during the invasion by a tribal army from the North West Frontier Province in Pakistan in October 1947. The book reminds us that while the violence was dying down in places such as Punjab and Bengal, it was only just beginning in places such as Baramulla. Whitehead meticulously outlines the causes and workings of the invasion which eventually unfolded into the full-scale war between India and Pakistan that led to the partition of Jammu and Kashmir. The importance of the book lies in telling this story through the memories of an assortment of participants in the events in the autumn of 1947, such as Sister Emilia, a survivor of the attack on the Christian mission at Baramulla; Father Shanks, who left behind a detailed diary of the events as the attack on Baramulla and the mission commenced; Leela, a Punjabi Hindu woman whose parents and siblings had taken refuge in the mission hospital once the invasion began; Sheikh Ghulam Mohammad and Randhir Singh Bali, both young boys at the time of the invasion; and Inayatullah, a local businessman and an initial collaborator of the tribesmen.

Their stories reveal the mechanics of the invasion and indeed the reasons for its failure to reach the capital, Srinagar, before the arrival of the Indian army. As the interviews with Sheikh Ghulam Mohammad, now a retired teacher, and Inayatullah, now a prominent and wealthy businessman in Baramulla, reveal, Kashmiri Muslims were initially in support of the tribal invaders, whom they saw as their liberators from the unjust rule of the Maharaja (74, 123–124). But once the *lashkar* (army) began carrying out activities such as murder, looting, and abductions of women, the population turned against them. Inayatullah, for instance, provided shelter to the *lashkar* and was looted in return, which convinced him that the tribesmen were an undisciplined group of men who refused to follow orders issued by their commanders (123–124). As Whitehead suggests, the couple of days the tribesmen spent in Baramulla on these activities provided the space for the Indian army to take control of the capital, Srinagar (130–131).

One of the most significant contributions of the book is a detailed study of the violence that occurred during the invasion, as Hindus and Sikhs in particular – who were seen as wealthy members of the town by the tribesmen – were targeted. Since the tribesmen attacked the houses of the wealthy, however, many Muslims too became the victims of looting and murder, with the tribesmen refusing to believe that a wealthy house could belong to a Muslim (124–125). The story recounted by Gunwant Kaur, who was a newly married bride at the time of the invasion, gives the reader a sense of the toll on one Sikh family – her father and three other male members of the family were killed, and three of her young female cousins were abducted, and never heard from again (127–128). Whitehead points out that the official Indian volume on the abduction of women that was compiled seven years after partition was silent about the abduction of women in places such as Baramulla because they did not fall in Pakistan or on the Pakistani side of the Ceasefire Line (127). This has created an enormous gap in the historical record and is responsible for the lacuna within subsequent historical scholarship on partition violence in the context of Jammu and Kashmir. Whitehead's own analysis of the existent

record, moreover, such as a study of the entries on the abduction of women in Muzaffarabad, reveals that the abductions of Sikh women were more often carried out by local Muslim men rather than the tribesmen. Furthermore, although not on the same scale, there were several cases of the abductions of Kashmiri Muslim women by Sikh men (128–130).

The violence suffered by families and individuals in Baramulla in 1947 cut across religious lines and while this kind of violence has subsided in other regions that were afflicted by partition violence in 1947, it continues unabated in Baramulla. While drawing too direct a line of descent from the events of 1947 and the contemporary crisis in Kashmir, Whitehead correctly points out that Baramulla remains at the center of separatist politics in the Kashmir Valley. Indeed, as he states:

The town has suffered heavier casualties, and endured much more prolonged trauma, than anything encountered during the brief but brutal visitation of the tribal lashkar. The nature of the conflict has changed. But at its root is the same faultline that first opened up as the tribesmen from the Frontier scaled the walls of the mission back in October 1947 (11).

The psychological trauma of partition, now somewhat healed in Punjab and Bengal, is incessantly relived in a number of areas within Kashmir, such as Baramulla, as the current crisis is cast along familiar lines. Moreover, the fact of the partition – of an entity that strives to be reunited and independent – lies at the heart of the trans-border political movement for *azaadi* (freedom/independence) and political rights in this region.

The ongoing nature of the violence that began in 1947 and continues in Kashmir is also palpable in the few works within the historiography on the partition of India that have taken Kashmir into account. Not surprisingly, these works are from the vibrant body of scholarship on women's experiences during partition. A case in point is Menon's and Bhasin's *Borders and Boundaries* (1998), which, through its attempt to incorporate women's histories in diverse regions during this moment into the mainstream of partition historiography, also brings Jammu and Kashmir into this historiography, from which it has been largely missing. A section focusing on a family of Khatri from Azad Kashmir (Muzaffarabad) illustrates the heavy toll of the attack of the raiding tribesmen in 1947 on women (50–54). This particular family lost almost all its female elders to either suicide or strangulation by the male members of the family as rumors about the raiders drawing closer to the town became more insistent.

As with the recollections of women and men in other regions that experienced partition violence, the memories of the survivors from this family are replete with silences about the role of men in facilitating women's deaths and the labeling of those women who refused to take their own lives as cowards (51–52). The experiences of these women during this time, as also women in Punjab and Bengal, were, as Menon and Bhasin note,

part of a continuum of violence that had death at the hands of one's own kinsmen at one end, and rape and brutalization by the men of the other community at the other. In between lay taking your own life, sublimating your own vulnerability and making of it something heroic. (57)

One of the most significant aspects of the retellings of that moment by several members of the Muzaffarabad family was that they saw their contemporary experiences as a continuation of past traumas. According to Menon and Bhasin, their stories were 'laced with references to ... recent experiences in Kashmir, and particularly to the vulnerability of Hindu women in the prevailing tension between Hindus and Muslims in the Valley' (50).

Furthermore, many of these individuals and families went through a long period of displacement before settling down or were displaced multiple times. For instance, one branch of this family left Muzaffarabad in 1947 and moved around for 10 years until finally settling down in Jammu in 1958 (53). Another family member, who left Muzaffarabad for Srinagar in 1947, became a refugee twice over when he had to leave Srinagar for Delhi in 1990 after the beginning of the insurgency (50). This vividly illustrates the continuing impact of the legally unrecognized partition of Jammu and Kashmir in 1947 on individuals, families, and political discourse in the region.

Violence and displacement have thus characterized the lives of the inhabitants of Kashmir since 1947. In her article, ‘Too Much Nationality (2012)’, Robinson draws our attention to the peculiarities of the long-term process of the making of the Kashmiri refugee in the period between 1947 and 1974. She argues that not only did South Asian partition refugees in general fall outside the realm of the postwar international refugee regime, but once the Indian and Pakistani states had created their own refugee regime to deal with the partition era refugees, people displaced from the princely state of Jammu and Kashmir during the time of partition fell outside the purview of these laws (346–348). Much like the abducted women in liminal spaces such as Baramulla were not included in official registers, so too Kashmiri refugees were excluded from the rehabilitation projects put in place for partition refugees to integrate them as equal citizens into the life of the newly emergent states of India and Pakistan. Likewise, their landed property was not considered to be evacuee property that could be resettled (354).

Regarded as state subjects of the erstwhile princely state rather than as citizens of India or Pakistan in this peculiar refugee regime, Kashmiris displaced during 1947 and in the wars and insurgency since, became refugees in perpetuity awaiting the resolution of the Kashmir dispute. Robinson notes that Kashmiri refugees were only temporarily resettled and their rights depended on their maintenance of claims over the land that they had left behind – which in turn was linked to their status as state subjects – and to which they were expected to return once the plebiscite in Jammu and Kashmir resolved the dispute in favor of either India or Pakistan (354–355). As Robinson states, this meant that

... people displaced from the Jammu and Kashmir territories had to remain categorically refugees in order to maintain their historical rights in the princely state, which in turn gave them rights to be resettled as refugees; they were citizens because they were refugees. (354–355)

Moreover, even after it became apparent in the early 1950s to national and international authorities that Kashmiri refugees could not return to their homes and lands, they were allotted temporary properties for resettlement based on their status and identity as hereditary state subjects of Jammu and Kashmir (357). This has had deep repercussions on the expression of individual and collective identities and movements of political belonging in this region, many of which continue to use the princely state as a frame of reference.

As Robinson points out, and as I noted earlier, Kashmiri refugees have been in the process of being continually created since 1947 through forced (and some voluntary) mass migrations during wars between India and Pakistan in 1947–1949, 1965, 1971, and 1999; border skirmishes; and the insurgency in the Indian state of Jammu and Kashmir since 1989. These over five million refugees, mostly settled in Azad Kashmir, Pakistan, are responsible to a large extent for organizing the movement of people, ideologies, and violence across the phantom border represented by the LOC (earlier the Ceasefire Line) (360–361; see also Ellis and Khan 1999). For them, the movement to reunify and free

Jammu and Kashmir is built on the memory of past partitions with their traumas of displacement and violence, compounded with equally violent contemporary partitions along political and economic lines. Thus, the category of refugee, as Robinson's work illustrates, is critical to understanding the ongoing nature of the current crisis in Kashmir.

Lines of control and division since 1949

Most writing on the Kashmir issue since 1949 has focused on territory rather than borders or the impact of borders on people's lives. This has had the effect of reifying the borders that were created at the time of partition and exacerbating the divisions along those and other lines since. Concepts of territoriality, put forward to explain the Kashmir dispute or offer solutions to it, however, do not capture the ways in which the inhabitants of this region articulate belonging – which is still tied to a more flexible notion of place rather than a defined territory – or how they translate that into a politics. I would suggest that borders and the need to traverse them play a central role in the lives of the region's inhabitants, as a result of which it is critical to analyze them from both the scholarly and popular perspectives. Despite remaining largely un-theorized as a border, there is an emergent body of scholarship on borders and borderlands that has included and discussed the LOC – the 435 mile long disputed border that runs through Kashmir – within larger analytical frameworks.

Banerjee argues that borders should be treated as independent political constructs since they generate specific kinds of political engagements and create their 'own history' (2010, 62). Making this point in the context of the LOC that divides the Indian and Pakistani parts of Kashmir, Banerjee states that although legally unrecognized, this border has nevertheless become 'ideologically sacrosanct', leading to political instability and conflict in the region. Controlling this border through violence and force has become an end in itself, with the border itself providing the rationale for its continued existence (62–63). Banerjee further points out that the aggressive militarization by India around the border has alienated the inhabitants of this region. At the beginning of the insurgency in 1989, not only did the Pakistani state immediately question the acceptability of the LOC as an international border, but more significantly, the LOC was incessantly breached as Kashmiri youth from the Indian state of Jammu and Kashmir crossed over to the Pakistani side for arms and military training (76–78). Thus, it is the ideological and militaristic meanings attached to it, rather than an innate enmity between India and Pakistan, that makes conflict along this border, as in Kargil in 1999, inevitable (63).

Hans reconsiders the LOC from a feminist perspective in the context of the Kargil conflict (2004). Much like Banerjee, she argues that the LOC is not simply a political boundary, but 'also engenders a language of its own' (278). This is the language of control, in this case control over the lives and identities of women who come into contact with the LOC – whether it is those who live on the border, those who cross over, or those whose husbands are stationed at the border as soldiers (282). The region around Kargil is the most multiethnic and multinational part of the long border that runs through the state, with Balti, Ladakhi, Zanzkari, and Purki inhabitants. Moreover, the LOC in this region has been particularly labile as villages in Kargil have fallen on both the Indian and Pakistani sides of the line depending on the time period. This has meant that the inhabitants have lived in an almost perpetual state of war since 1948, a fact that has had enormous consequences for the lives of women. Women's movements are restricted in a variety of ways during times of conflict, which in turn has an impact on their articulation of identities and their ability to earn a livelihood, among other things (276–277).

As Hans points out, violence has become a part of the daily lives of women who live in the Kargil region. Many thousands have been displaced as a result of shelling from Pakistan as well as the occupation of their villages by the Indian army. This is followed by the induction of men into servitude for the army while the women and children are relocated to other places, sometimes without the knowledge of the male members of their families. Once released from servitude, the men wander around villages looking for their families (280–281). Both men and women have no citizenship rights in this context, but even more significantly, they have no access to family or community support either, since they are dislocated from both. According to Hans, ‘The women of Kargil live in a vacuum with no links to anyone else in the country. Unwanted, unheard, and disregarded they are excluded from nationalist undertakings, and their nationalism always remains suspect’ (282). Disputed borders thus render the very belonging of these women questionable. Not only are they excluded from mainstream Indian nationalism, but also from Kashmiri Muslim nationalist narratives. Thus, an analysis of this border from a feminist perspective reveals that territorial conceptions of belonging and nationalism fail to take into account those individuals who inhabit the ‘zone of a nowhere land’ (285) on the literal and metaphorical margins of states.

In her book, *Beyond Lines of Control* (2004), Aggarwal attempts to move beyond national security concerns in her study of the border village of Achinathang, Ladakh, which is located on the LOC. She argues that it is the region’s marginality as a borderland that renders it central to Indian nationalist narratives and projects, while at the same time providing the perfect space to resist these very narratives. While placing Ladakhi cultural performances and practices at the heart of her narrative, Aggarwal also re-centers Ladakh itself within the discourse on the Kashmir conflict. Not only is Ladakh marginal within India, it is also marginalized within the state of Jammu and Kashmir. Even though these regions are drawn into and profoundly influenced by the conflict because of their location, the Kashmir Valley remains at the center of both scholarly and popular understandings of the Kashmir conflict. Works such as those by Hans and Aggarwal thus perform the very important function of reminding us of the internal partitions within the state of Jammu and Kashmir.

Aggarwal points out that despite the presentation of Ladakh as a borderland that is simultaneously a spiritual paradise as well as a backward, underdeveloped zone located on the fringes of India, Ladakhis define the region ‘both as a border zone and as a social and political center’ (13). Indeed, what is most compelling about the book is its focus on the performance of cultural/national events, such as independence day, wedding ceremonies, funeral rites and archery festivals, to illuminate the multiple ways in which Ladakhis appropriate and re-imagine majoritarian definitions of themselves and their land to claim a ‘representational center’. Furthermore, Aggarwal points out that these performances embody multiple meanings of belonging on the borderlands of Kashmir. While Ladakhi men engage with conceptions of homeland at the level of citizenship and national belonging, Ladakhi women articulate a very different vision of home. For them, home is not a territorial entity that they can control, but rather an emotional space or birthplace to which they do not want to sever ties, even after marriage or displacement as a result of conflict (142–145).

Robinson’s book, *Body of Victim, Body of Warrior* (2013), also rectifies the Valley-centered approach to the Kashmir issue by focusing on the interconnections between the two sides of the LOC through the movement of individuals across the border. At the same time, by discussing the meanings of belonging to land and community articulated by these individuals, the book transcends the territory-centered understandings of the Kashmir conflict. Robinson not only traces the creation of the Kashmiri refugee during the moment of partition, as discussed earlier in the context of her article, but she also analyzes the changing

meanings of refugee identity in the post-1947 period as different groups of individuals crossed the LOC from the Indian to the Pakistani part of Jammu and Kashmir. She thus reveals the ambiguities surrounding the expression of belonging as these individuals struggle with multiple identities – of refugee, *jihadi* (holy warrior), husband, father, mother, and ultimately, of being Kashmiri in a divided Kashmir.

Based on several years of fieldwork in the towns and villages of Azad Kashmir and amongst the Kashmiri diaspora in Pakistan, the book illustrates the complex interaction between political and religious ideologies in articulating the changing meaning of refugee in these contexts. Those forced to migrate from Jammu and Kashmir State (India) to Azad Kashmir (Pakistan) until 1990 had a very different understanding of their *hijarat* (migration) than those who migrated after the start of the insurgency against the Indian state in 1990. While the former chose to live as refugees in the hope of returning to their homes and lands once Kashmir was reunited, the latter chose to pick up the mantle of *jihad* (holy war) and take up arms against the Indian state based on the infringement of their own as well as their loved ones' rights as persons (*huquq-al-ibad*). Both drew on the ideas and practices of a lived Islamic tradition, not a universal Islamic ideology, to support their choices. At all times, Kashmiri refugees were marked by their 'social difference', since their status was tied in one way or another to an ongoing conflict (Introduction, chaps. 3, 4).

As we have seen, borders and their traversal dominate the lives of the inhabitants of Kashmir. This is especially the case because the primary border that governs their existences is mired in a paradox – the inevitability of the LOC is accepted by both India and Pakistan at the same time as both deny its conversion into a permanent border. In an attempt to provide a non-territorial solution to this paradox that would also help in resolving tensions between India and Pakistan, a joint India–Pakistan study funded by the United States Institute of Peace and the Institute of Peace and Conflict Studies, New Delhi, issued a report based on fieldwork conducted in areas on both sides of this border. Subtitled *Making Borders Irrelevant* (Chari et al. 2009), this report makes a strong case for the rendering the LOC into a porous and permeable border.

The authors put forward five factors through which to analyze borders in South Asia in general and the LOC in particular: first, several borders in South Asia are in the constant process of being remade since they are not accepted by the states involved; second, this had rendered these borders almost impassable through legal means, thereby making all movement across them, which continues regardless, illegal; third, these borders are unacceptable to the people who live around them because they have created divisions among families and groups of people who had lived together before their creation; fourth, states have failed to provide good governance in these areas, ignoring the legitimate demands of the people; and finally, this has led to the emergence of non-state actors who have taken control of the borderlands, leading to protracted armed conflict (xii–xiv).

Given these factors, which are very much in play at the LOC, the authors argue that making the border irrelevant by rendering it permeable addresses multiple issues that have made the Kashmir problem so intractable. Most significantly, it would allow the states to transcend thorny sovereignty issues while giving primacy to the interests of the border populations, which as the study illustrates, are very much in favor of reestablishing familial and commercial linkages between the two sides of the LOC. As the surveys conducted as part of this study indicate, there is almost near consensus amongst the common people who live in proximity to the LOC on either side that making it into a soft border with greater legal access to movement would make their lives better by reducing violence and uncertainty. In particular, poorer families with relatives on the other side of the border,

as well as businessmen and traders, are large constituencies with special interests in opening the borders to legal traffic of people and commodities (36–37). Since the success of this exercise depends on the devolution of power to the local governments of Azad Kashmir, Gilgit-Baltistan, and Jammu and Kashmir, the report suggests that softening borders would also have the salutary impact of increasing direct communications among the three entities, while at the same time drawing in the neglected regions along the border such as Skardu in Gilgit-Baltistan and Leh-Kargil in Jammu and Kashmir (51).

The LOC would thus be transformed from an ‘alienated borderland’, defined by Martinez as a borderland where ‘... routine cross-boundary interchange is practically non-existent due to extremely unfavorable conditions’ (2002, 2), to a more ‘integrated borderland’, where, again according to Martinez, borderlanders enjoy peace and security as traffic between the two sides of the border flows without restrictions and ‘each nation willingly relinquishes its sovereignty to a significant degree for the sake of achieving mutual progress’ (5).

Conclusion

Both partition and borders play a central role in the lives of the inhabitants of the erstwhile princely state of Jammu and Kashmir. Spread across two states and divided between numerous regional entities, these individuals have never been fully absorbed within the citizen-making processes of either India or Pakistan. If partition is to be seen, as stated by Gilmartin, ‘... as a key moment in a much longer and ongoing history linking the state and the arenas of everyday conflict’ (1998, 1092), then nowhere is this more palpably evident than in Kashmir. While simply not existing on the official map of India, or being represented as a dotted line on Pakistani and international maps, the LOC nonetheless exists as a powerful ideological and material construct that embodies the incessant rehearsal of violent state and non-state imperatives in the region since its emergence in 1949. Since that moment, places and people have been vivisected in what can only be described as an ongoing partition, rendering specific spaces, such as Kargil, and particular groups in these spaces, such as women, liminal and marginal to mainstream narratives and processes of national and political construction. The fictional narrative by Waheed, *The Collaborator* (2011), located at the LOC, captures poignantly the brutal violence of this phantom border for those who live along it and those who dare to traverse it.

One of the main points that emerges from the foregoing review of the literature on partition and borders in the context of Jammu and Kashmir is that articulations of belonging in this region cannot be measured in terms of territory alone, especially if territoriality is defined as access to citizenship rights within territorial nation-states. Not only do the inhabitants of Kashmir not have access to these rights because of their location, equally significantly, they define belonging in terms of home and place that transcends official borders. In its narrative tradition, Kashmir has always been a discursive space that existed at the intersection of the local and universal before it was any kind of territorial entity. Perhaps it is the attempt to force a territorial solution onto this dispute, either within the boundaries of India or Pakistan (created in 1947) or the erstwhile princely state (itself created in 1846) that have led to its intractability.

A focus on partitions and borders in the case of Kashmir can enrich the historiography on partition in South Asia as well as the scholarship on borderlands. More significantly still, it reminds us that the Kashmir dispute, much like the creation of Pakistan in 1947, is about more than territory. As a result, it cannot be resolved merely through talks amongst the triad of India, Pakistan, and the Kashmir Valley. It includes a variety of other regions, and

multiple groups of people, whose lives have been equally bordered and whose voices therefore need to be included in our scholarly understanding of the region, as well as towards a permanent resolution of the problem. This special issue takes a small but significant step in that direction.

Disclosure statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the author.

References

- Aggarwal, Ravina. 2004. *Beyond Lines of Control: Performance and Politics on the Disputed Borders of Ladakh, India*. Durham: Duke University Press.
- Banerjee, Paula. 2010. *Borders, Histories, Existences: Gender and Beyond*. New Delhi: Sage.
- Butalia, Urvashi. 2000. *The Other Side of Silence: Voices from the Partition of India*. Durham: Duke University Press.
- Chari, P. R., Hasan Askari Rizvi, Rashid Ahmed Khan, and D. Suba Chandran. 2009. *The Kashmir Dispute: Making Borders Irrelevant*. New Delhi: Institute of Peace and Conflict Studies.
- Ellis, Patricia, and Zafar Khan. 1999. "Partition and Kashmir: Implications for the Region and the Diaspora." In *Region and Partition: Bengal, Punjab and the Partition of the Subcontinent*, 269–297. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Gilmartin, David. 1998. "Partition, Pakistan, and South Asian History: In Search of a Narrative." *Journal of Asian Studies* 57 (4): 1068–1095.
- Hans, Asha. 2004. "Women Across Borders in Kashmir – The Continuum of Violence." In *Peace Studies: An Introduction to the Concept, Scope, and Themes*, edited by Ranabir Samaddar, 268–291. New Delhi: Sage.
- Hasan, Mushirul, ed. 2000. *Inventing Boundaries: Gender, Politics, and the Partition of India*. New Delhi: Oxford University Press.
- Jha, Prem Shankar. 1996. *Kashmir, 1947: Rival Versions of History*. Bombay: Oxford University Press.
- Khan, Yasmin. 2007. *The Great Partition: The Making of India and Pakistan*. New Haven: Yale University Press.
- Martinez, Oscar. 2002. "The Dynamics of Border Interaction: New Approaches to Border Analysis." In *Global Boundaries: World Boundaries Vol. I*, edited by Clive H. Schofield, 1–15. London: Routledge.
- Menon, Ritu, and Kamla Bhasin. 1998. *Borders and Boundaries: Women in India's Partition*. New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press.
- Nair, Neeti. 2011. *Changing Homelands: Hindu Politics and the Partition of India*. Harvard: Harvard University Press.
- Robinson, Cabeiri D. 2012. "Too Much Nationality: Kashmiri Refugees, the South Asian Refugee Regime, and a Refugee State, 1947–1974." *Journal of Refugee Studies* 25 (3): 344–365.
- Robinson, Cabeiri D. 2013. *Body of Victim, Body of Warrior: Refugee Families and the Making of Kashmiri Jihadists*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Roy, Kaushik, ed. 2012. *Partition of India: Why 1947?* New Delhi: Oxford University Press.
- Talbot, Ian, and Gurharpal Singh, eds. 2009. *The Partition of India*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Waheed, Mirza. 2011. *The Collaborator*. London: Penguin Viking.
- Whitehead, Andrew. 2007. *A Mission in Kashmir*. New Delhi: Viking.
- Zamindar, Vazira. 2007. *The Long Partition and the Making of Modern South Asia: Refugees, Boundaries, Histories*. New York: Columbia University Press.

Copyright of Contemporary South Asia is the property of Routledge and its content may not be copied or emailed to multiple sites or posted to a listserv without the copyright holder's express written permission. However, users may print, download, or email articles for individual use.